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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 06 PESHAWAR 000106

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: FATA AND NWFP: WEEKLY INCIDENTS OF TALIBANIZATION, APRIL 25  
- APRIL 30

REF: A) ISLAMABAD 888; B) PESHAWAR 81; C) ISLAMABAD 936; D) PESHAWAR 87; E) ISLAMABAD 871

CLASSIFIED BY: Lynne Tracy, Principal Officer, U.S. Consulate  
Peshawar, U.S. Department of State.  
REASON: 1.4 (d)  
Introduction

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11. (C) Military operations in the Lower Dir and Buner districts of the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) dominated headlines during the final week of April. By April 30, GOP officials declared both operations successful, but stated that cleanup operations could last days or weeks. (Refs. A, B) The trend of militant violations of the peace deal in Swat evident in previous weeks continued, with abductions, looting, and new checkpoints by militants. Multiple incidents in previous calm Mansehra and Mardan districts appear to have been enabled by last week's militant takeover of Buner as a base of operations. Bajaur and Mohmand, by contrast, were quieter than in past weeks.

12. (C) The operations in Lower Dir and Buner created a large number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), but the exact number of IDPs and their needs had yet to be determined by the end of April. (Ref. C).

Lower Dir

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14. (SBU) The following is a summary of events in Lower Dir District, NWFP, a neighboring district to Swat, where the government launched a military operation during the final week of April:

April 26: Security forces reportedly killed 26 militants in an offensive by security forces after militants ambushed troops, killing two Frontier Corps soldiers and wounding at least five, including a Major. Fierce clashes were reported in the Maidan area, home of Tehrik-i-Nifaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi Chief Maulana Sufi Muhammad. Taliban chief of Maidan, Maulana Shahid, was reportedly killed. Chitral Scouts and Dir Scouts were reportedly involved in the fighting, centered on the Lal Qila area of Maidan, home to Commander Hafizullah.

April 27: Federal Interior Minister Rehman Malik claimed that the district was under "complete control" of security forces. The Pakistani Army claimed that it inflicted "heavy casualties on militants" in the Maidan area. The fighting has reportedly caused a large displacement of people.

April 28: Pakistan's military spokesman claimed that the operation against militants in Lower Dir was successfully completed, with 70 to 75 militants killed.

April 30: Despite previous announcements that the operation had concluded, security forces continued to target suspected militants hideouts in the Maidan area from gunship helicopters and artillery. Thousands of residents fled the fighting.

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Buner

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15. (SBU) The following is a summary of events in Buner District, NWFP, a neighboring district to Swat, where militants entered in April:

April 25: A grand jirga of locals, with thousands attending, appealed for peace in the district and demanded the army stay out. Despite reports of a Taliban retreat from the district, residents said that many fighters remained in the hilly outskirts of the district. One police officer estimated that 200 local Taliban could be seen on the roadsides. Some militants smashed cassettes, a cassette player, and shaved the heads and moustaches of four men as punishment for listening to music. The Taliban beat the men and told them never to listen to music again.

April 26: Some tribal elders announced conditional support for the Taliban, but urged them to call back its non-local militants from the district. Another public meeting attended by 3,000 at Swarai Bazaar urged the Taliban to stop their activities in the district. Militants occupied a hospital at an Afghan refugee camp in Koga, converting it into their headquarters. Taliban put up posters in streets and markets ordering women not to go shopping.

April 28: Security forces, backed by tanks, artillery, gunship helicopters and jetfighters, launched a major operation against

militants in Buner. Intelligence agencies reportedly intercepted a cell phone call between Swat Taliban chief Maulana Fazlullah with his commanders instructing them to take over the district after faking a withdrawal. Militants took 71 security officials hostage in Sultanwas after inviting them to talks at a local mosque.

April 29: The Pakistani military announced that it took control of district headquarters, Daggar. Security forces reported killing over 50 militants in the two-day operation, including two "high-value" targets: Maulvi Shahid and Qari Quresh. Gunship helicopters targeted militant positions throughout the district. 18 of 71 security personnel kidnapped were recovered.

April 30: Militants reportedly attacked a Frontier Corps checkpoint in northern Buner, and captured several police stations in the area. Suicide motorcycle and car bombers tried to hit government troops in the south of Buner, but were killed before reaching their targets. Two Frontier Constabulary platoons, besieged at Jowar Camp, were reportedly allowed to leave after surrendering to militants. Security forces reportedly killed another 14 militants and gained control over Ambela heights. The military reported tough taliban resistance over the 8 km long Ambela Pass, claiming to secure half of that distance.

Swat

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16. (SBU) The following is a summary of events in Swat, where a recent peace agreement and Qazi courts are being implemented:

April 25: Militants reportedly put up posters in Mingora's streets and markets ordering women not to go shopping, stating that "the peace agreement does not mean that obscenity should be re-born."

April 26: Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP) spokesman Muslim Khan said Taliban would not lay down weapons unless all Americans in Pakistan returned to their country and Darul Qaza was established in Swat. Militants reportedly set up checkpoints in Bahrain and were seen advancing toward Kalam, while security forces set up a checkpoint in Khwazakhela.

April 27: TNSM suspended talks with the government based on the operation in Lower Dir. Residents reported rising tension as militants continued armed patrols, threatened a group of lawyers and recalcitrant militants, captured a telephone exchange and looted two NGO offices in Saidu Sharif. The Executive Director of one of the NGOs stated that militants stole all of its computers, printers and furniture, and destroyed its records; the NGO has temporarily suspended its operations in Swat shifted to Islamabad for safety.

April 28: Militants warned journalists of dire consequences if they did not stop "propaganda" against their "struggle" for the enforcement of Shari'a in Malakand Division.

April 30: Police vacated a station in Kalam due to security concerns. Four policemen were reportedly abducted in Charbagh and Amankot; ten people from Swat were abducted during the previous three days. Militants opened fire on a car in Asharai in Matta, killing two and injuring four.

Bajaur and Mohmand

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¶7. (SBU) The following is a summary of events in Bajaur and Mohmand Agencies, where the Pakistani military has been conducting military operations since August 2008:

April 27, Bajaur: Militants reportedly killed an elder of the Salarzai lashkar, along with another tribal elder.

NWFP

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¶8. (C) The following incidents have occurred in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) according to press and consulate contacts:

April 25, Battagram: After the taliban issued threats against local and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs), referring to them as "centers of vulgarity," the organizations suspended operations in the district.

April 25, Lower Dir: A bomb placed in a football near a girls' primary school exploded after the children took it home, killing twelve, seven from the same family.

April 26, Dera Ismail Khan: Militants killed the district leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and his wife on their way home from a wedding by spraying their vehicle with bullets.

April 26, Mardan: Residents claimed that Taliban militants had stepped up attacks in the district and started assembling local followers in the area.

April 27, Nowshera: Militants fired on a police post with heavy weapons with no casualties reported.

April 27, Lakki Marwat: Militants killed District Police

Officer with an roadside IED.

April 28, Mansehra: Militants reportedly have infiltrated into Kala Dhaka, the district's tribal belt, from bordering Buner District, and established a camp in the area.

April 29, Mardan: Militants ambushed a police patrol unit on the Islamabad-Peshawar Motorway (M-1), seriously injuring an officer. Reports claimed around 30 militants fired a rocket-propelled grenade, which missed the patrol vehicle, but hit another vehicle. (Ref. D)

April 30, Mansehra: Militants reportedly blew up a police vehicle with a remote controlled bomb, seriously injuring an officer.

April 30, Upper Dir: Militants reportedly damaged a bridge connecting Upper Dir with the Kohistan district.

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FATA

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19. (C) The following is a roundup of incidents of talibanization in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) and Frontier Regions:

April 26, North Waziristan: A hand grenade explosion killed four family members in their pickup truck.

April 26, Khyber: One levy was killed and another injured in Landikotal after an exchange of fire.

April 26, Kurram: Nine persons died and 17 others were injured in renewed clashes between the Turi and Bangash tribes.

April 26, Orakzai: Two women were killed when a bomb went off in their village home. Militants also blew up the shrine of Nusrat Ali Hussain.

April 27, South Waziristan: Militants reportedly killed a man accused of being a "US spy."

April 30, FR Kohat: In an apparent sectarian attack, a roadside bomb went off when a mini-bus passed, killing a Shi'a man and wounding six others.

April 30, FR Bannu: Militants blew up a government girls' school.

April 30, Orakzai: Militants auctioned off the goods they retrieved from 10 shops of Sikh merchants they forcibly occupied earlier in the week.

#### Government Response

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¶10. (SBU) This is a summary of government responses to "creeping talibanization" according to press and consulate contacts:

April 26, Swabi: Police seized 475 kilograms of explosives and arrested two people on the Peshawar-Islamabad Motorway, seizing 19 crates of explosives.

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April 26, Battagram: Security forces in Hazara Division of NWFP (Note: Hazara Division consists of five districts: Abbottabad, Battagram, Haripur, Kohistan and Mansehra. End note.) stated that adequate measures had been taken to stop the spillover of militants from nearby Malakand Division. Several hundred troops were deployed in Thakot, Battagram District, NWFP, since April 24, and in Shangla and Kohistan, to block the route linking Malakand Division with Hazara Division and the northern areas.

April 27, FR Kohat: Security forces blew up two suspected militant houses in Darra Adam Khel.

April 27, Peshawar: Police reportedly arrested 11 Uzbeks suspected of militant activities.

#### Grass Roots Efforts to Halt Talibanization

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¶11. (U) The following events are examples of activities taken by local communities to halt the spread of Talibanization:

April 26, Peshawar: Billboards featuring women reappeared in the city after several weeks in which taliban threats had led to their removal.

TRACY